

BOOK REVIEW OF THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA, THE LAST BATTLE

WRITTEN BY C. S LEWIS

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1. Introduction

Literary work can be divided into several different types such as novel, poem and drama. Each of type has its own readers with specific reason why they like novel, poem or drama. One of the most interesting genres that we ever read is children's literature. Children's literature presents magical and attractive story and becomes our favorite things during our childhood. The story in children's literature can always amaze us in past, present, and future time, at the same time it can also teach us about moral values.

However, children's literature itself is not as simple as what people think. People often misunderstand about the concept of children literature in which it refers to a book that they can read easily. In children's literature the writer needs to give an attractive story in order to make the readers interested to reading the book. The Chronicles of Narnia, The Last Battle is a good example of children's novel. It contains fantasy that will attract children. The novel has a different and unique story that also able to be read by the older readers.

Fantasy fiction novel like Narnia, The Last Battle, is well known since the first book published internationally. The novel has its worldwide popularity because of its Christianity

background and interesting plot. The Last Battle was first published in 1956 in United Kingdom. The Last Battle is one of seven series fantasy novel that written by Clive Staples Lewis called The Chronicles of Narnia.

Similar with the tittle, The Last Battle is the last book of its series. The novel tells us about an adventurous story of Eustace Clarence Scrubb and Jill Pole, old friend of Narnia, who asked to save the land of Narnia from the Calormene in the last days of Narnia by the Great Lion, Aslan. In The Last Battle, several plays from the previous books also appear to help Scrubb, Pole and Tirian to fight for the freedom of Narnia and to against the False Aslan. Narnia's writer,

The very first reason on why I chose The Last Battle of Narnia as my final project simply because it is a favorite book of mine since my childhood. The last book of Narnia's book series also won an annual Carnegie Medal from the Library Association as the year's best children's book by a British Subject which absolutely makes the book worth to be read. It brings the reader to fantasize every story line that appears in its book and definitely a good novel to read. Because of those reasons, I choose The Last Battle as my final project.

2. SUMMARY OF *THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA, THE LAST BATTLE*

Narnia is a magical place that people may not ever imagine would ever be existed before. It is a place where animal speaks like human, mythological beings exists and where the wildest adventure begins. Human brought to Narnia for several times since Jadis the white witch rules the kingdom. This time old friends of Narnia, Eustace and Jill brought to Narnia by The Great Aslan since the Land is stirred and upset again.

The story of The Last Battle begins with the appearance of a sly ape named Shift and a simple minded donkey named Puzzle who lived up to the west beyond Lantern Waste and close with the great waterfall of Narnia. As Puzzle is a simple minded donkey, Shift easily take advantages from him by ask him to do many things as he ordered him to do. He persuaded Puzzle to wear a lion's skin and pretend to be The Great Aslan to fool the Narnians.

Tirian, the last king of Narnia, and his unicorn Jewel warned by Roonwit the Centaur about the False Aslan. However the King does not lose his faith by asking for Aslan's help and gets a vision of people from other world though he does not know who they are. The war between the

loyal Narnian and Calormenes cannot be stopped. Tash, The Calormene god, tries to kill the remaining Narnians but the High King Peter, King Edmund, Queen Lucy, Lord Digory, Lady Polly, including Eustace and Jill appears and banishes Tash.

When the war is over, they sit in a green field. People that are not loyal to Aslan believe that they are stuck in a stable dark and act accordingly. While for people that are loyal to Aslan, they see Aslan suddenly comes. He calls and orders Father Time to end the world of Narnia and takes all creatures who believe him into his own country. As The Great Lion leads them to the Garden, he explains what happened to them in the real world and said that they died in a railway accident. Susan's final fate becomes a mystery in the last book of The Chronicles of Narnia.

3. REVIEW OF *THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA, THE LAST BATTLE*

a. The Strength of C.S Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia, The Last Battle*

a.1. Novel Appearance

C. S Lewis's *The Last Battle* is an interesting novel since the very first time its reader sees the novel. The cover of the novel delivers a good impression which might drive the reader to buy it. Here, Jewel's appearance that standing above the sky full of stars, simple proposition of its title and a nice choice of color gradation show magical side of the novel that presented by Lewis in *The Last Battle*.

a.2. Plot

The Last Battle is a fast read novel, it require only a few dedicated hours to turn from page to page. With only 210 pages and a language that easy to understand, it makes the last series of Chronicles as a good novel to read for people from many various ages.

Furthermore, Lewis puts several conflicts which make the novel is worth to read. It has a lot of cliffhangers and makes the reader always want to know what is going to happen next in his book. The story has a lot of unexpected events in it, especially after the unexpected arrival of another old friend of Narnia besides Eustace Scrubb and Jill Pole. Other than that, Susan's absence because she does not believe in Narnia again become another surprising plot that given by Lewis in *The Last Battle*.

a.3. Moral Values

In addition, this book brings many emotions that wrapped in a book and it is clear to see that the connections between characters are so real. The connection between King Tirian and Jewel is one example of real connection and emotion in *The Last Battle*. Lewis incredibly captures their relationship as an intense and close friendship. Another example that is shown in the novel is Jill and Eustace. Their close friendship that pictured since the first time they met in *The Silver Chair* and the way Lewis explain it all is so wonderful.

...I'm Eustace Scrubb and this is Jill Pole, said the Boy. And we were here once before, ages and ages ago, more than a year ago by our time, and there was a chap called Prince Rillian, and they were keeping this chap underground, and Puddleglum put his foot in- (Lewis:1956:57)

Lewis simply shows it by capturing several moments that happened there.

b. The Weaknesses of C. S Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia, The Last Battle*

b.1. The Need to Read The Previous Novels

The author amazing story with its internal-external conflict and flashback-forward plot can make the readers confuse with the story line even though the language and vocabularies is easy to understand. Later on, since this is a series novel so it makes the reader who never read any of Lewis's *Chronicles* novels feel confuse with the appearance of several characters that re-appear in *The Last Battle* can. There is also a character that in *The Last Battle* could actually be an interesting part of the story but, Lewis does not give further explanation about him. Emeth for example, he is a character that turn to fight for Narnia even though he is a Calormene man.

b.2. The Racist Naming of The Character

As we all know, *The Last Battle* made in the 50's. It is an era when racism becomes one of major issues to talk about in the whole world. Unfortunately Lewis puts several words or names its character with some word that sound racist even for children. The word "darkies" as he refers to the Calormenes and appears several time in the book should not appear in any of children's book. People of Calormene are pictured as lack of intelligence barbarian and easy to

affect especially by Shift-the ape. Some people that read The Last Battle claims that it is quite racist because the author put the word darkies there.

b.3. Small Explanation about Characters' Point of View

In the last book of Chronicles Narnia we can see that there are no clear personalities between characters. Here, every character in The Last Battle speak with one voice, that of the narrator. It is unfortunate that Lewis does not give clear character's point of view in its novel. Besides giving emphasis on the theme of the story, showing character's point of view will also make the reader understand the story better and in order to know about every efforts that they are facing to free the land from Shift and the Calormenes.

b.4. Unexpected ending

The ending of the story is another weakness of this novel. At the end of the story, C.S Lewis writes that there are only three Pevensies that can enter Narnia again. Peter, Edmund, Lucy including their parents can enter the land once again and live there eternally. The fact tells us that it is only Susan that cannot enter Narnia because her faith in Narnia is vanished. It says that she chose make up and boys. She thinks that Narnia is only her childhood's fantasy and memory which she would not believe again.

4. CONCLUSION

The Last Battle is a novel that talks about a never ending adventurous story of Narnians and people from another world that believe in Narnia. In its story, Lewis' bring a plot that can make its loyal reader feel curious. Chronicles of Narnia have brings him to get his name worldwide and his major success. He reaches his popularity when he writes Chronicles of Narnia series in the 50's. The story in this last book of Narnia is a final book of how everything happens in the last days of Narnia. Furthermore, even though The Last Battle is clearly a great novel, but the reader should give more attention whenever they read the novel. Here are several strengths in C.S Lewis's novel The Last Battle. The first one is the novel appearance, it give good impression which might drive the reader to buy it. The next thing is The Last Battle's plot gives a perfect adventurous and exciting fantasy plot to the reader. The novel also brings many moral values about friendship, trust and leadership that shown in the book's story line.

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